



18 September 2023, Kuwait City, Kuwait – To mark World Patient Safety Day 2023, Kuwait’s Ministry of Health is leading a pivotal campaign to address patient safety and environmental concerns. Its Healthy Cities Office is enabling the safe disposal of unwanted medications within the community, reflecting this year’s theme of the WHO global health day: “Engaging patients for patient safety”.

This campaign is a massive stride towards ensuring the responsible and sustainable disposal of unused and expired medications, which is necessary to safeguard both public health and the environment. The main aim of the campaign in Kuwait is to inspire people to return their unwanted medicines to designated collection points. Health workers will then properly dispose of the drugs, so that there are no adverse impacts on the health of individuals or the environment.

Dr Amaal Al Yehia, Head of the Healthy Cities Office at the Ministry of Health, said: “We affirm our commitment to ensuring patient safety and preserving the environment in Kuwait. This campaign serves as a testament to our dedication to the well-being of both our community and our planet.”

Even greater engagement

Given the overwhelmingly positive response to a similar campaign in 2022, this year’s initiative has been expanded to include 20 primary health care centres across Kuwait. Each has a collection point for community use. The campaign began on 10 September and will run until 21 September, bridging World Patient Safety Day on 17 September.

The global health day aims to inspire stakeholders to work together to design health care policies and safety interventions that truly align with patients’ needs and preferences – ultimately enhancing the safety of health care globally. This collaborative effort should involve all stakeholders, from patients, families and patients’ organizations to health workers, health care leaders and policy-makers. This year, the World Patient Safety Day slogan calls on stakeholders to “Elevate the voice of patients”.

Dr Assad Hafeez, WHO Representative in Kuwait, said: “This campaign aligns perfectly with the objectives of World Patient Safety Day, emphasizing the importance of engaging patients and communities. By safely disposing of unwanted medications, the Ministry of Health is working to protect health for all in the community and, in parallel, the environment. We commend its efforts.

“As Kuwait takes this significant step towards patient safety, environmental stewardship and collaborative health care design,” Dr Hafeez continued, “it sends a resounding message that each individual’s participation plays a pivotal role in shaping a healthier and safer future for all.”

The campaign also serves as a timely reminder to people not to donate unused medicines to friends or family, as doing so could pose risks to others. It encourages people to only hold onto the drugs they genuinely need, to avoid building up an unnecessary store of medication.

Various esteemed entities in Kuwait are supporting the campaign, including the WHO Kuwait Country Office; Drug Inspection Administration and the Safety Department, Quality and Accreditation Directorate; Central Directorate of Primary Health Care and the Services Administration, Ministry of Health; Environment Public Authority; Dhahiyat Abdullah Al Salem Healthy City; Patients Helping Fund Society; and College of Pharmacy, Kuwait University.

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Media contact

Serin Al Ghussein
WHO Kuwait Country Office
Email: sal@who.int

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